



Envision Arlington Diversity Task Group

Date: February 10, 2020
Time: 6:45 – 9:00pm
Location: Jefferson Cutter House, 611 Massachusetts Ave. Lower Level (enter from the parking lot entrance)

Minutes

Attendance: Michaiah Healy, Rajeev Soneja, Katell Guellec, Barbara Thornton, Beth, Maren Larken, Kelly Lynema, Brooks Harrelson, Jo Ann Preston, Lynette Culverhouse, Louise Popkin, Paula, Michael Jacoby Brown, Jillian Harvey, Elizabeth Dray

1. Brooks read a letter of thanks from Maren for her internship experience.
2. Introductions/what brings us here
3. Brooks moved to approve the January minutes and Rajeev seconded; the minutes were approved.

4. Town Business/Updates

- Discussion of open seats for Town Meeting and efforts to encourage diverse candidates to run.
- Juli Brazile has stepped down as chair of Envision Arlington. Kelly reports that in the interim the Town will look for volunteers to step in who've had some leadership experience in Envision Arlington. Those interested should contact Juli. Also, there are two additional openings on the standing committee for Envision Arlington, which meets monthly, usually the 2nd Wednesday of the month.
- Kelly reported that there are some adjustments being made to the language used by Envision Arlington (used to be Arlington 2020 when the “goals” were originally set in the 1990s). Elevating these goals to “values” would be a change to the Town bylaws and needs to go before Town Meeting. Then each task group and the standing committee would work from these values and decide on actions. We could consider changing our name to DITG — Diversity and Inclusion Task Group. Another example is changing “citizen” to “resident.”
- Interview for next APD chief, three internal candidates. Michaiah reports that she represented DTG at the interviews. Each person asked a question and then gave strengths and weaknesses as feedback. The Pedrini situation was discussed. The names of the candidates are

confidential. The [list of questions](#) was read with general discussion about these questions. Candidates identified the biggest challenge as the Pedrini situation, and after that it was more training, fostering a sense of trust, and disrupting roles within the department. (Questions listed at the end of these minutes.)

- Census: Kelly reports that the national census will be the first online one, and an invitation will be mailed to your home. You can go online or report over the phone in up to 12 languages. The citizenship question will not be on it and the information is confidential and cannot be shared with other government offices. It can only be used for statistical purposes. This year the Census Bureau is under funded by 40% vs 2010. It's important that those who can respond quickly do so to ensure that resources can be directed later at those who are harder to reach. The Town will issue communication at all phases of the process.

5. DIG/School Updates

- Dr Macneal visit: No new updates about whether/when he can come to a DTG meeting
 - The Town has contracted with Liza Talusin for three events starting next month. The agenda needs to be created for those. An end-of-the year event had been planned with Wee the People, but this has now fallen through. Some lessons learned from this are to be more organized and to have a single point of contact when approaching an outside group. In addition, there is a learning about the Town's privilege in asking for things be done for free. It was suggested that a community development block grant could fund such an event. Michaiah is leading a discussion for parents of color at Thompson. Dr Macneal has hired an assistant who is another POC in the school system.
6. **Maren's Update:** She is working on getting a commemorative plaque set up for the mass, unmarked grave of enslaved peoples by the UU Church. Maren has been in touch with Joanne Robinson from the Arlington Historical Commission about how to spread the word and raise funds. Maren presented to the internship class and got a lot of interest from classmates. Superintendent Bodie also is interested and asked to see research so she can spread awareness. Maren is exploring media coverage as well through Your Arlington. Kelly has been part of an archeological project that possibly would involve using sensors to view what's underground. Michael suggested that this be brought to Town Meeting for education and funding. Brooks will liaison with the Cemetery Commission regarding possible support.

7. **DTG Budget:** The budget is \$1,200 for this year. Can the DTG have a bank account? It was decided to keep money with Envision Arlington, which is an established committee. The standing committee needs to consider whether it wants to accept donations and allow fund-raising to go into the gifts account. It was suggested that DTG should not ask for permission to raise money because there should be an expectation to get more from the Town each year.
- Ideas on how to use DTG funds included: (1) Sponsor a talk by Professor Julian Agyeman from Tufts on just sustainability; he opens his talk with a land acknowledgment. (2) Pay HS students to talk about what's important to them and facilitate a video of such an event, Kevin Wetmore from ACMI studios could help with the cameras available (could show at Inclusion Day in April). (3) A documentary project by HS student: People in a Room is raising money through GoFundMe.
 - For March DTG meeting: Proposals can be brought forward for how to spend this money.

8. **Announcements:**

- a. Arlington Reads, Esmeralda Santiago: Writing a Life Sunday, March 8, 3:00 p.m.
- b. Social and emotional learning dept in APS is doing Engage You event town-wide. What are the stressors that kids experience on May 2 at Gibbs. Multiple sessions and childcare.
- c. March 14 is Dance with Dignity at First Parish to benefit local refugees ARC Cluster, legal services United Legal Defense Fund, 7-10:30 pm, Stanley and the Undercovers, \$25 tix.

Upcoming Meetings

DTG, Jefferson Cutter House Gallery, lower level, 6:45 pm
Monday: March 9

APD interview questions:

Police Chief Interview - Stakeholder Meeting February 6, 2020

Some of the questions you are about to be asked are challenging, however, we believe the next Chief will be asked these questions.

Number One

Please start by telling us why you want to be the Chief of the Arlington Police Department.

Number Two

Some would say that police today are dealing with more mental health calls than ever before. Have you seen this as a trend in Arlington? What has Arlington done to address this and what is your vision to address this in the future?

Number Three

Arlington and several other Middlesex County Police Departments are using the Restorative Justice Model. Have you been trained in the Restorative Justice Model? If yes, what do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the RJ model? In your judgment, how valuable was the use of the model in the case involving Lt. Pedrini?

Number Four

What steps can the APD take to increase the diversity of its staff to better reflect the changing demography of the town? What policies and practices are in place by APD to address new citizens' concerns and needs and is there specific anti-bias & antiharassment training within the department? What would you add to what the department is currently doing?

Number Five

What is your vision and thoughts for community policing (plans, programs, policies) to increase community trust?

What does the department do to build trust with the most marginalized communities such as immigrants, refugees, the LGBTQ community, those with disabilities and those with substance abuse disorders?

What will be your strategy for maintaining good relationships with trusted partners of the Town (the groups that have designees here today)?

Some residents are calling for the creation of a civilian review board. Do you support the development of such an entity? If not how – in your opinion – does the community hold the Arlington Police Department accountable?

Closing

Is there anything you'd like to say before we conclude?